

Message Text

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PAGE 01 CAPE T 00782 140713Z
ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04
H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01
SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 ARA-06 /087 W
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FM AMEMBASSY CAPE TOWN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6108
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMEMBASSY GABORONE
AMEMBASSY LAGOS
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAPE TOWN 0782

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: SF WA PFOR US
SUBJ: FOLLOW-UP ON NAMIBIA TALKS: ASSESSMENT OF
WINDHOEK BRIEFINGS

REFS: A) CAPE TOWN 0750, B) USUN 1375

1. SUMMARY. BELIEVE MAY 9-10 WINDHOEK BRIEFING OF
INTERESTED PARTIES ON THE CAPE TOWN TALKS WAS HELPFUL
IN REMOVING SOME MISAPPREHENSIONS AND IN SECURING A
REASONABLE DEGREE OF UNDERSTANDING AND ACCEPTANCE OF THE
INITIATIVE BEING PURSUED BY THE FIVE. MANY DOUBTS AND
PRESENTLY UNANSWERABLE BASIC QUESTIONS WERE RAISED.
THE GROUPS BRIEFED ARE NATURALLY WELL AWARE OF THEIR
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DIRECT STAKE IN THE EFFORT AND ARE ANXIOUS TO BE KEPT
INFORMED AND TO HAVE OPPORTUNITIES TO EXPRESS THEIR
VIEWS AS THE PROCESS UNFOLDS. END SUMMARY.

2. THE BRIEFINGS WERE GENUINELY WELCOMED AND SERIOUSLY
CONSIDERED. THE IMPORTANCE ATTACHED TO THEM WAS
REFLECTED IN THE INTENSE MEDIA INTEREST AND IN THE FACT

THAT THE GROUPS BRIEFED ASSEMBLED OVER A WEEKEND FROM ALL PARTS OF NAMIBIA ON LESS THAN THREE DAYS' NOTICE. IT WAS PARTICULARLY NOTABLE THAT ALL ELEVEN OF THE TURNHALLE DELEGATIONS HAD REPRESENTATIVES PRESENT. IT IS ALSO WORTH NOTING THAT, SO FAR AT LEAST, THE CONFIDENTIALITY REQUESTED BY THE FIVE HAS BEEN SUBSTANTIALLY HONORED BY ALL THOSE BRIEFED, EVEN BY THE SWAPO AND FEDERAL PARTY REPRESENTATIVES WHO WERE FRANKLY ANXIOUS TO MAKE PUBLIC USE OF WHAT HAD BEEN TOLD THEM.

3. ASIDE FROM THE DISMAY OF THE TURNHALLE DELEGATES OVER THE SHUNTING ASIDE OF THEIR EFFORTS, THE STRONGEST VIEWS EXPRESSED BY THE PARTICIPANTS CONCERNED ACCOMMODATION OF "THE REALITY OF ETHNICITY" IN NAMIBIA, DOUBTS ABOUT THE IMPARTIALITY OF THE UN IN LIGHT OF ITS EXCLUSIVE COMMITMENT TO SWAPO, AND THE OBSTACLES TO ASSURING TRULY FREE AND FAIR ELECTIONS. REPEATEDLY CITING THE ANGOLA EXPERIENCE, THE TURNHALLE DELEGATES AND THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE WHITE COMMUNITY QUESTIONED THE WILL AND ABILITY OF THE FIVE IN THE LAST ANALYSIS TO RESIST AND PREVENT RUSSIAN/CUBAN/SWAPO DISRUPTION OF A FREE POLITICAL PROCESS. THEY COULD NOT ENVISION WITHDRAWAL OF SA SECURITY FORCES FOR A LONG TIME TO COME IF PEACE AND SECURITY IS TO BE PRESERVED. SWAPO, NNF AND THE LEADERS OF THE PREDOMINANTLY BLACK AND BROWN CHURCHES WERE JUST AS CONVINCED THAT A FREE AND FAIR POLITICAL PROCESS WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE UNTIL THOSE FORCES WERE REMOVED; EVEN WHEN MORE OR LESS INACTIVE, THEIR MERE PRESENCE WAS A POWERFUL INTIMIDATING INFLUENCE.

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4. THE INITIAL RESERVE AND SUSPICION OF SOME OF THE PARTICIPANTS WERE, AT LEAST IN PART, OVERCOME IN THE COURSE OF THE BRIEFINGS. THE MERE FACT THAT THE FIVE HAD COME TO WINDHOEK TO TALK TO INTERESTED PARTIES HAD A POSITIVE IMPACT. WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE NNF GROUP, WHICH WANTED SEVERAL HOURS TO SET FORTH ITS OWN POSITION, IT IS PROBABLY FAIR TO SAY THAT THE PARTICIPANTS WENT AWAY GENERALLY SATISFIED THEY HAD BEEN INFORMED AS FULLY AS POSSIBLE AT THIS STAGE AND HAD BEEN GIVEN AN ADEQUATE OPPORTUNITY TO EXPRESS THEIR OWN VIEWS.

5. WHILE UNCONDITIONAL ENDORSEMENT OF THE INITIATIVE BEGUN BY THE FIVE IN CAPE TOWN WAS NOT FORTHCOMING, CONTINUATION OF THE EFFORT WAS IN NO CASE DISCOURAGED AND IN SOME CASES IT RECEIVED ENCOURAGEMENT. DESPITE THEIR PARTICULAR OBJECTIONS AND DOUBTS, MOST PARTICIPANTS SEEMED TO APPRECIATE THAT A STEP FORWARD HAD BEEN TAKEN TOWARD A PEACEFUL, INTERNATIONALLY ACCEPTABLE SOLUTION.

THERE WAS PRACTICALLY UNIVERSAL EXPRESSION OF HOPE
THAT THE WINDHOEK BRIEFING EXERCISE WOULD BE REPEATED
AT LATER STAGES IN THE PROCESS.NELSON

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